

ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT- EARLY LEWINSKY NEWS REPORTS (1998)

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From January 21st through January 29th 1998 ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT reports on the early days of the Lewinsky Scandal.

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[Music] president clinton faces allegations of asking a former white house intern to lie about their relationship a very difficult day for the white house i didn't ask anybody not to tell the truth there is no improper relationship the allegations i have read are not true pope john paul ii arrives in cuba a very good day for cuba from abc this is world news tonight with peter jennings reporting tonight from cuba evening good evening from havana where one of the day's big stories has begun to unfold one of them the pope is here and the world is waiting to see whether he will shake up this island and the veteran communist leader who runs it fidel castro the other very big story of the day is in washington where the clinton administration has already been badly shaken up by the possibility that president clinton and one of his advisers vernon jordan obstructed justice by encouraging a young woman to commit perjury about an affair she is alleged to have had with the president in both these stories tonight there are repercussions far and wide we're going to begin with the president's problem because it is the country's problem we'll have a report from abc's jackie judd who had the story first we'll talk to our legal analyst jeffrey toobin but first we go to abc sam donaldson where the bombshell fell at the white house sam peter it's been a confusing day here at the white house as president clinton and his aides have sought to satisfy a stunned public and mr clinton is totally innocent of these dangerous charges but have somehow had difficulty finding the right words with which to do it in a previously scheduled interview with pbs newshour anchor jim lehrer mr clinton said he has no improper relationship with the young woman no improper relationship define what you mean by that well i think you know what it means it means that that there is not a uh a sexual relationship an improper

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uh a sexual relationship an improper sexual relationship or any other kind of improper relationship you had no sexual relationship with this young woman there is not a sexual relationship that is accurate but as viewers noticed every time the president spoke he used the present tense what about the past had there been a sexual relationship proper or improper with monica wilinski in the past when she was a white house intern and what about the matter of whether the president asked the young woman to lie you had no conversations with this young woman monica lewinsky about her testimony possible testimony before and giving uh i did not urge anyone to say anything that was untrue i did not urge anyone to say anything was untrue that's my statement to you but the president carefully did not answer whether he had talked to the young woman monica lewinsky about her testimony even if he did not ask her to lie aids said the president would clear up these ambiguities in a subsequent interview with the white house with national public radio interviewers robert siegel and mara liasson once again the president said he had not encouraged anyone to lie then is there any truth to the allegation of uh of an affair between you and the young woman no that's not true either that seemed fairly straightforward but then came this question did you have any kind of relationship with her that could have been misconstrued maura i'm going to do my best to cooperate with the investigation i want to know what they want to know from me i think it's more important for me to tell the

american people that it wasn't improper relations i didn't ask anybody to lie and i intend to cooperate late today on the third try with an interview with roll call newspaper the president said flatly the race the relationship was not sexual but that's the problem he clearly had some sort of relationship with this young woman abc news has learned from sources that the woman after she left the white house employment was cleared in often sometimes late at night and without a white house pass where she was visiting had to be listed

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where she was visiting had to be listed and we're told that often it was listed that she was visiting one of mr clinton's secretaries who by that time late at night almost certainly had gone home so what she was doing here is still at odds when the press secretary was asked whether records would be released to the press he replied they would not but that investigators would be cooperating with absolutely late today the independent council kenneth starr sent over a wide-ranging subpoena for all of the records that have to do with miss lewinsky's visits or time at the white house which means not only must the records be produced but they cannot now be destroyed peter sam stay with us for just a moment we first learned about this story from abc's jackie judd she's been covering the white water investigation led by the independent council kenneth starr and this report of hers tonight begins with the two women at the center of this story when monica lewinsky left the white house to work at the pentagon she became friends with this woman linda tripp and it is tripp who months later brought lewinsky to the attention of the independent council ken starr abc news has learned that last summer tripp began recording her phone conversations with lewinsky in which the young woman allegedly spoke about her affair with mr clinton and his efforts to convince her to lie to cover it up why would tripp secretly tape their talks she had earlier worked at the white house and one source says she was angry when mr clinton's attorney robert bennett called her a liar for claiming the president had made a pass at another white house aide why would tripp go to star last month both tripp and lewinsky were subpoenaed by lawyers in the paula jones sexual harassment lawsuit who were looking for more evidence of sexual misconduct by the president lewinsky allegedly told tripp that she was going to lie about the affair and tripp had to as well because tripp knew independent council star and didn't trust the justice department to protect

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trust the justice department to protect her tripp went to star with tapes of more than 10 calls with lewinsky significantly she also claimed she had heard three messages from the president himself on lewinsky's voicemail it is unclear whether starr has obtained those messages abc news also has learned that starr's office and the fbi wired tripp to record a conversation with lewinsky and gave her equipment to tape more calls so that investigators could hear for themselves what had been in the earlier tapes lewinsky allegedly claims in the tapes that mr clinton told her to deny their relationship to jones lawyers and to see clinton confidant vernon jordan according to a source who heard the tapes lewinsky says jordan instructed her to lie under oath because lawyers never prosecute perjury in a civil case and he promised her help in finding a new job jordan refused comment today sources tell abc news that jordan also helped lewinsky find a lawyer who filed a sworn affidavit in which he did deny a sexual relationship with the president another lawyer newly hired by lewinsky's family would not rule out that her story could change i am saying it would be irresponsible for me to make an absolute statement and i have made no absolute statement until i complete this whole process lewinsky is scheduled to be deposed on friday by paula jones's attorney sources say as of now peter she plans on taking the fifth uh jackie one question on this subject of depositions when the president was deposed last saturday in the paula jones case do we know whether he was asked about the lewinsky affair and if he was what he said yes we've been led to believe that he was asked about this and that he denied having any sexual relationship with her okay thanks very much jackie judd in washington as i said we first brought this story to light we're joined now by our legal analyst jeffrey tobin who is in new york this evening jeffrey on what basis does kenneth star get involved in this

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does kenneth star get involved in this in the first place well it does seem odd because kevin starr is the white water special prosecutor in this case whatever it is is a long way from whitewater but his jurisdiction over the four years he's been in office has been expanded several times to include the travel office allegations the fbi files issue vince foster's suicide and what they all have in common is at least an allegation of obstruction of justice that's the claim here obstruction of justice so it seemed like it was within kenneth starr's bailiwick and when he asked the attorney general for permission to enlarge his investigation it came very quickly right he came very quickly and the the judge the judges who supervise independent counsels ratified judge reno's attorney general reno's request that star be given the new authority okay jeffrey tuban thank you very much these interviews the president has been giving today to public broadcasting and national public radio were all sort of pre-fixed because they were in preparation for the president's state of the union one of the people you've already heard of this evening who questioned the president was national public radio's mara eliason and she is with us in washington this evening or i think you're the last reporter to see the president today anything to add especially on his mood he seemed quite defensive one of the worst days of president clinton's political career but he's a cool character and he told us that he was furious but other than that big jaw muscle you could see working as he talked he didn't really show it i think he clearly made a decision to say as little as possible and it was hard to dislodge him and we listened to your interview did he say anything after you moved away from the microphone that's for publication no absolutely not i mean we pressed him on every conceivable question you heard that we asked if he had had any kind of relationship with the woman if he had had any kind of conversations with her about her testimony and he was more unequivocal in his denials with us uh than he had been with jim lehrer of public broadcasting but he was less forthcoming he said flatly i've said all

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forthcoming he said flatly i've said all i'm going to say about this and i don't think i can say any more thanks very much let's go back to sam donaldson at the white house sam so we get to the end of the day with the president having made these denials in in various forums today one would hope from the white house's point of view they're a bit more relieved are they well peter the danger here is not that the public will believe that the president had a sexual liaison with someone other than his wife he has braved and he has overcome those kind of accusations before the danger is that more evidence would pile up that the president had suggested that this young woman lie under oath or that he had vernon jordan or someone else do that and if that were the case that material would surely be taken to capitol hill and a serious impeachment investigation would get underway okay sam thanks very much and everybody else in washington and new york tonight i said one would hope for the white house's point of view i meant one would think from the white house's point of view that with all these denials he might be a bit more relaxed we'll continue to cover this story later on prime time live and on nightline on world views tonight this thursday major stories in washington sacramento and cuba the crisis at the white house the president and one of his closest friends say they did not tell the young woman to lie we'll take a closer look at the friend he's the ultimate insider and he knows the gravity of the situation ted kaczynski is the unabomber without question he pleaded guilty today he will not be executed and the pope in cuba millions of cubans hear him criticize their government [Music] from abc news world headquarters in new york thursday january 22nd this is world news tonight with peter jennings good evening we begin tonight with the white house crisis there is no doubt tonight that the clinton presidency is being menaced by these allegations that the president somehow encouraged a young woman to lie under oath to protect him the

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under oath to protect him the presidential entourage has dutifully tried to circle the wagons but morale at the white house is not good and today one of the men closest to mr clinton was forced to make a statement and a statement only that he had done nothing wrong there are several strands to this story so let's go to our white house correspondent first sam donaldson sam peter the white house strategy today was to continue blanket denials of wrongdoing while stonewalling all questions about the details of this scandal the president spoke during a photo opportunity with visiting palestinian leader yasser arafat the allegations are false and i

would never ask anybody to do anything other than tell the truth mr clinton went on to say the american people have a right to answers and they will come at the appropriate time soon he said but not now later vernon jordan the president's close friend surfaced before the microphones to deny he's done anything wrong in his dealings with monica lewinsky at no time did i ever say suggest or intimate to her that she should lie jordan said presidential secretary betty curry referred lewinsky to him and he tried to help her find employment at revlon and at american express neither company hired her and he introduced her to her first lawyer that was all but he answered no questions saying he's been subpoenaed to appear before the grand jury and we'll answer everything there that's your if that's your interpretation that's your interpretation yes i don't know her and i don't know anything about her mother yeah i just gave the answer that i gave it was left to presidential spokesman mike mccurry to sweat it out at the regular daily briefing dodging and weaving his worst moment coming on the subject of jennifer flowers who mr clinton talked about back in 1992 on 60 minutes she's a legend which she calls a 12-year

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she's a legend which she calls a 12-year affair with you that allegation is false but now with sources saying the president acknowledged last saturday in his paula jones deposition that he did have an affair with flowers mccurry was pressed to defend the president's truthfulness the president uh knows that he told the truth in 1992 uh when he was asked about that relationship and he knows that he testified truthfully on saturday and he knows his answers are not at odds that's all i think the public know it presidential leadership requires public confidence and stonewalling does not help that some of the uh presidents coming up on the state of the union so for that matter is the country we can expect anything from the president before then well i'd like to have this behind them of course by next tuesday but that seems to be impossible the independent council has sent over other subpoenas one for betty curry the presidential secretary people make the case here that the president's own lawyers have to get all the facts together and of course that's correct and so it seems doubtful that by next tuesday peter the president will be able to answer all these questions and dispel all of this mistrust sam thanks so much sam donaldson at the white house tonight try as the white house will to control the flow of information here which is a natural thing for a white house to do the story to a large extent is developing outside their control so much depends on what monica lewinsky does or says more specifically next no one knows that better than abc's jackie judd monica lewinsky's lawyer william ginsberg arrived in washington late today to prepare his client for whatever comes next it is supposed to be a deposition tomorrow before lawyers for paula jones who plan to ask lewinsky if she had an affair with the president but ginsburg is now suggesting that deposition might be delayed we have a hearing tonight with the judge in arkansas judge wright and she will determine then whether the hearing is going to go forward ginsburg wants it delayed because lewinsky is now so embroiled in ken starr's criminal investigation

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investigation and he wants some time possibly to strike a deal with starr this would not be the first time for such discussions abc news learned today that after lewinsky was confronted at this hotel by investigators and told there were tapes of her allegations against the president she was offered leniency if she agreed to wear a wire and secretly tape conversations of others presumably vernon jordan mr clinton's secretary and possibly the president himself but a source says the talks fell apart before specific targets were mentioned privately administration officials are complaining that star plunged ahead with his investigation even before winning justice department approval and therefore not everything he's collected would be admissible in a court of law starr walked into a mob of reporters today to say otherwise any officer carrying out the activities of the federal government must be properly within his or her jurisdiction there were more developments today regarding this document obtained by abc news sources say that lewinsky last week gave it to linda tripp tripp also had been subpoenaed by lawyers for paula jones and this document contains talking points instructions for how to answer their questions about lewinsky it is suggested that tripp say she found out lewinsky left the white house because she was stalking the p the president not because she was having an affair with him it is not known who wrote the talking points prosecutors believe it did come from a lawyer obviously concerned about limiting damage to president clinton peter thanks very much thank you gentlemen washington so much

of what's going on at the moment reminds us of how things have changed in washington in president kennedy's day bill clinton's idol the president's personal relationships inside the white house were ignored by the press but the magic of being close to power and in the best sense for some serving the country has never changed

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the country has never changed and so where does monica lewinsky fit in here's abc's linda douglas monica lewinsky grew up as a child of privilege raised in the elite neighborhoods of beverly hills she was like many kids at beverly hills high school the product of a bitter divorce sources tell abc news that during her troubled adolescence she bragged that she had an affair with one of her teachers she later went to portland oregon where she graduated as a psychology major from lewis and clark college her former housemate believes she would not lie about having an affair with the president i think she was a very trustworthy person i certainly wouldn't want to live with somebody that i didn't trust but another close friend describes lewinsky as an attention seeker who talked constantly about her personal relationships over dramatizing the details she was very flirtatious also a bit emotional also young and somewhat immature that she talked a lot and that i don't think anyone that really knew her would put it past her to make this up at the white house sources say she always tried to be near the president and was openly excited in his presence she was moved to a job in the pentagon where sources say she worked hard and did her job well no matter what her life has been to this point what she has to say in the next few days about her relationship with the president will change her life forever linda douglas abc news washington without question later in the broadcast we'll take a closer look at vernon jordan the consummate insider who says he did nothing wrong and in just a moment some of the day's other news the unabombers confession ted kaczynski admits everything and our report tonight from cuba where the pope has just taken some pretty hard shots at fidel castro this is world news tonight with peter jennings brought to you by buick century

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brought to you by buick century looking for more space try the next century it's got the most interior space of any vehicle in its class because extra space is one luxurious touch that's appreciated by families everywhere the new century by buick is also a consumer's digest best buy making century one of the best values on earth what you're not eating oatmeal this is oatmeal oh yeah sure it's toasted oatmeal all right toasted crunchy you're putting the oatmeal in the toaster no no i don't toast the oatmeal quaker toasts the oatmeal look quaker toasted oatmeal it's free toasted quaker toasted oatmeal delicious flakes of toasted oatmeal with crunchy clusters of honey sweet notes it's your other oatmeal this is good they should call this quaker tasty oatmeal we'll write a letter remember soluble fiber from oatmeal is part of a heart-healthy diet may reduce the risk of heart disease in california the trial of the unabomber has come to an abrupt end just as opening statements were about to start ted kaczynski pleaded guilty to murder in exchange for life in prison the plea bargain spares his life and it spares the government from trying a man with serious mental problems in sacramento first of all his abc's ken kashiwahara kozinski's agreement to plead guilty came minutes after the judge ruled he could not be his own attorney as he had requested then the proceedings came to an abrupt halt as defense attorneys huddled with prosecutors to work out a plea bargain which they had been negotiating for months kaczynski had previously insisted on the right to appeal in exchange for a guilty plea today he dropped all demands and the justice department had insisted on pursuing the death penalty believing kaczynski to be sane that position changed after a federal psychiatrist found him to be a paranoid schizophrenic for kaczynski's brother and mother who had lobbied against the death penalty it was clearly a victory and in colorado unibomb victim john

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and in colorado unibomb victim john hauser who was severely injured in one of the attacks said he's pleased this is a very suitable outcome and uh you know as i've said before the most important thing is this guy can't conduct the kind of uh terror campaign that he has all along kaczynski's attorneys had all but conceded his

guilt and plan to convince the jury he should be spared the death penalty today they got what they wanted without the jury ever hearing a word of testimony ken kashuahara abc news sacramento well our legal correspondent terry moran is also in sacramento tonight just one question terry is it over it is for ted kaczynski in this trial but the issues that have been raised in this courtroom over the last three extraordinary weeks will linger on first should the criminally responsible but mentally ill the mad and bad be executed in this country that's the question that the kozinski case raised it hasn't been answered second should they be allowed to represent themselves as he asked judge garland burrell told him no this morning but on the grounds that he asked too late and that's a problem that will nag the criminal justice system for years to come tonight a closer look at the other man in this white house crisis vernon jordan he is accused of encouraging monolith monica lewinsky to lie under oath about a sexual relationship she's alleged to have had with the president this is much more the nub of the crisis than any sex which may have been involved this afternoon as you heard mr jordan made a statement in which he said he had done nothing wrong one thing we do know this is a man who has developed enormous influence abc's chris wallace has covered him for years vernon jordan has spent the clinton years behind the scenes as one of the president's closest advisors but the allegations that he tried to obstruct justice forced him today into the full glare of public scrutiny i fully appreciate the gravity of this situation

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the gravity of this situation mr clinton has turned to the 62 year old jordan often to help steer him out of trouble on the night white house official vincent foster shot himself jordan was at the president's side he was also there when political strategist dick morris was told to quit the 96 campaign because of his own sex scandal he's a good friend to have and he has been bill clinton's friend for quite some time um and has helped him maneuver his way out of trouble at various points advised him on how to deal with very sensitive issues but sometimes the president's problems have become problems for jordan when webster hubble left the justice department jordan reportedly helped line up jobs for him independent counsel kenneth starr has investigated whether it was an effort to buy hubble silence on whitewater i don't think you quite understood no comment now prosecutors are looking at even more serious charges according to sources who have heard the secret tapes monica lewinsky says jordan told her to lie about her relationship with the president and jordan admitted today he tried to help her get a job although he made it sound like just a good deed i believe to whom much is given much is required and so i believe and giving a helping hand jordan first gained attention as head of the national urban league where he worked to get big corporations to support civil rights but in 1981 jordan changed careers he joined a washington law office and became one of the capital's top power brokers now he wears shirts handmade in london and drives a red cadillac and one black activist is written of what he calls vernon jordan disease powerful blacks who forget their roots and leave their people behind but until now no criticism and no investigation has threatened jordan vernon jordan gets criticized by a number of people because not only is he not the the militant firebrand but he's not even out there on the front lines of the civil rights struggle anymore he's a pure inside player

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anymore he's a pure inside player one thing everyone told us today is how careful jordan is and how surprised they would be to see him involved in obstruction of justice a long time washington insider put it this way vernon jordan might go right up to the line but he won't go to jail for the president or anyone else peter thanks very much chris wallace for that closer look there are great many unanswered questions this evening so let's take a somewhat closer look at where we think this is going to go legally our legal analyst jeff toobin is here jeff obstruction of justice the special prosecutor has been interested in mr jordan for a long time take it from there well what the crime really says is whoever corruptly obstructs the due administration of justice is guilty of the crime and the key word is corruptly that means that the prosecution prosecutor has to prove that the defendant intended that the law be obstructed and that means in this case that ken starr would have to prove that vernon jordan intended that monica lewinsky lie in her deposition it's very hard to get that kind of state of mind evidence and he doesn't have it yet and and we're of course also dealing with a lot of rumor here and a lot of source reporting so at the moment everybody's in a very difficult situation right it's true and

it's always important to remember the reason ken starr may not have made this case and he may not make any case is that no one's guilty of anything and in criminal investigations that's always worthwhile to keep in mind what do you think of the phrase the next legal step is we can anticipate well the next important step it seems to me is monica lewinsky's deposition in the paula jones case she it appears is going to take the fifth amendment so she won't give her deposition at that point kenneth starr the special prosecutor will have to decide whether he wants to give her immunity that would require her to testify in the in the grand jury and that appears to be the likely first step he's going to take with her okay thanks very much jeffrey tuban our legal analyst

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legal analyst for the first time in 40 years thousands of cubans gather to lend their hearts and minds to someone who's not in the government when we come back [Music] on world news tonight this friday the crisis in the white house abc news has new details about what monica lewinsky says went on and the president's defenders say he is the victim of an independent prosecutor out to get him and the media rushing to judgment we'll take a closer look [Music] from abc news world headquarters in new york friday january 23rd this is world news tonight with peter jennings good evening the white house crisis pretty much dominates the news again tonight the president's crisis team has spent the day trying to figure out the best way for him to defend himself against charges of illicit sex and cover-up throughout the country people are sad or angry frustrated fed up there's enormous pressure on mr clinton to explain himself today someone with specific knowledge of what it is that monica lewinsky says really took place between her and the president has been talking to abc's jackie judd the source says monica lewinsky claims she would visit the white house for sex with mr clinton in the early evening or early mornings on the weekends when certain aides who would find her presence disturbing were not at the office according to the source lewinsky says she saved apparently as a kind of souvenir a navy blue dress with the president's semen stain on it if true this could provide physical evidence of what really happened and what was lewinsky told to say about the affair after receiving a subpoena from lawyers for paula jones our source says lewinsky claimed that while president clinton and vernon

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while president clinton and vernon jordan never used the word lie they did say to deny the affair because there would never be any proof if both parties denied it when lewinsky asked what happens if there is evidence of an affair she allegedly was told to just say it's not you abc news has obtained documents which confirm that lewinsky made efforts to stay in contact with the president after she left the white house these are bills from a courier service which lewinsky used at least seven times between october the 7th and december the 8th for deliveries from her pentagon office to the white house the packages were sent to the southwest gate with a contact number for betty curry the president's personal secretary one source tells abc news the packages contained love letters another package sent to vernon jordan's law firm we are told contained a list of jobs that lewinsky would be interested in jordan yesterday admitted he tried to help her find work lewinsky we are told remains here inside her washington apartment her attorney william ginsburg today accused investigators from independent counsel ken starr's office of putting the squeeze on lewinsky to win her cooperation after he had the the wire material he lured miss lewinsky to the ritz carlton hotel in pentagon city and with the help of four or five fbi agents and three or four u.s attorneys managed to detain her although she was technically free to go for eight or nine hours without an attorney star's office denies any wrongdoing but more importantly both sides now seem ready to move on we've learned peter that tomorrow star in ginsburg will meet about cutting a deal and getting monica lewinsky to cooperate in this criminal investigation thanks very much jackie judd in washington tonight while the lawyers and certainly reporters have been focused on the allegations of illicit sex and allegations that monica lewinsky was encouraged to lie on the president's

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encouraged to lie on the president's behalf and these are still allegations we are dealing with the president's staff has been trying to wrench the country's attention back to his political agenda sam donaldson is the white house tonight sam it hasn't been easy for him right not at all peter the president and his political advisors have been trying to devise a strategy to get out front on this story before it completely overshadows his state of the union address next tuesday but his legal advisors have urged him to wait and tonight it appears they have won the argument mr clinton held a previously scheduled cabinet meeting to review the year ahead then sent four cabinet members out to report that he told them the allegations are untrue that we should stay focused on our jobs and that he will be fine but reporters wanted to know how the focus can be on work with this story hanging in the air i think the american public would be appalled if they thought that we weren't doing our jobs the public seems to be appalled by the accusations that the president may have been involved with a young woman i think the american people would be appalled if we weren't doing our jobs the debate over what would appall people the most soon ended after the cabinet members were pressed to individually state whether they believed the president yes i believe that the allegations are completely untrue i'll second that and it was left to presidential spokesman mike mccurry to bring things back to reality i think the american people are trying to wonder you know what's going on here they want to know what the president has to say on it i think the president wants to tell them i think at the proper time he will for a while today a plan was being considered for the president to sit down with a reporter or a small group of reporters before next tuesday but the president's lawyers argued vehemently that it was dangerous for the president to speak up before the facts were checked and assembled and if he had said something that subsequently would have been proved to be untrue that would have been worse we're told tonight the lawyers have won there will be no major presidential statement on this subject before next tuesday sam i know the president's been working the phones talking to supporters

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working the phones talking to supporters around the country what on earth is he telling them well we're told that the president has called key supporters to say look i've got a good story you're going to hear it don't worry i'm going to be fine i'm also told by people not in the white house may i emphasize that part of the strategy is going to be not only to attack this young woman's veracity but to attack her character okay sam thank you very much sam donaldson at the white house tonight the president and monica lewinsky the young woman getting all the attention of course but there are others what about mrs clinton hillary clinton once again finds herself in a situation where her husband's fidelity is being questioned in front of the entire world and once again it looks like she will be his champion abc's linda douglas is standing by in washington linda well sources close to the first lady tell abc news that mrs clinton is handling these latest allegations with steely resolve one described her as being in full battle regalia determined to beat back the crisis by fiercely defending her husband it is my pleasure and honor to introduce the first lady of the united states only hours after this latest scandal erupted the clintons were out putting up a united front but for mrs clinton it may have been like a scene from a recurring nightmare in which she is forced to fight charges that her husband is a womanizer as she has done before our marriage is a strong marriage we love each other we support each other when the monica lewinsky charges surfaced mrs clinton lashed out in a radio interview it is difficult and painful anytime someone you care about you love you admire is attacked abc news has learned that mrs clinton is consulting and calling a close circle of friends and advisors trying to develop a strategy now there was some talk about her taking some kind of bold move perhaps making a public statement but no final decisions have been made linda this opportunity isn't there because wasn't she scheduled to go out next week and talk about child care that's exactly right she was going to be the white house front person on child care

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care friends speculate that she'll still do that and one told me she is determined not to be pitied okay thanks very much linda douglas in washington tonight so what about one of the men who is driving this investigation is it a truth seeking mission or a witch hunt we'll take a closer look at kenneth starr when we come back this is world news tonight with peter jennings brought to you by cotton incorporated [Music] tonight we're going to

take a closer look at a couple of the accusations which some of the president's most ardent supporters have made they say that mr clinton is being victimized by the independent counsel can a star who's a republican out to get him they say they also say the media is leading the public to judge him guilty without waiting for the facts to come in first mr star how does he get from investigating a white whitewater land deal to allegations of sex and cover up here's abc's tim o'brien kenneth starr's investigation began three and a half years and 30 million dollars ago then the case was limited to a complicated land deal known as whitewater but with court approval it has been expanded repeatedly to webb hubble then number two at the justice department who star convicted of bilking clients while a lawyer years earlier in arkansas to improprieties at the white house travel office misuse of fbi files vince foster's suicide and now to suggestions of obstruction of justice in the lewinsky case some critics say it has gotten out of control what began as a confined focused investigation has suddenly become something like a walmart of independent council investigations where every possible item can be purchased lawrence walsh was the independent council in the iran contra matter he says star's investigation may be legal but that it's inappropriate for him to interfere in paula jones pending civil suit in which monica lewinsky is a witness it's very unfair to have mr starr making

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to have mr starr making uh taking steps based upon his view of what's right and what's wrong and what's truthful and what isn't and some say it was unfair from the start to have starr a lifelong republican to be the independent counsel ronald reagan appointed him a federal appeals court judge president bush nathan solicitor general his administration's top courtroom advocate still supporters say it would be unreasonable to name a new independent council every time some new allegation of wrongdoing arises you can't create a brand new independent council office that takes time to find someone it takes time to staff it up star was already in existence and he was already investigating similar charges if people don't understand how the whitewater investigation in little rock has stretched to a sex and perjury scandal in washington starr himself has done little to help i can't i can't comment on the specifics with respect to a specific jurisdictional grant in one sense he doesn't have to comment the attorney general and a special three judge federal court that oversees the investigation have signed off on stars looking into this new chapter in whitewater but appearances still count and at least to some there is the appearance of a partisan showdown between a republican prosecutor and a democratic president with the careers of both men riding on the outcome tim o'brien abc news washington there's one more thing about the star investigation which rankles his critics they recall that just before mr star was appointed he said publicly that he was considering a legal brief on behalf of paula jones opposing the president's claim of immunity from her sexual harassment suit he didn't file it because he became the independent counsel but let's put it to our legal analyst jeffrey toobin jeff does this not raise the possibility there's a lingering issue there for mr starr peter i think there may be a political problem but not i think a legal problem he is investigating this case at the request of janet reno

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request of janet reno and with court approval he's not taking sides in the paula jones case he's investigating obstruction of justice which it seems to me he has every right to do and so he has the possibility to go on expanding this investigation if he so chooses as long as the court which supervises his activities gives him approval he's free to go and these blanket subpoenas that he sent to everybody normal procedure absolutely normal procedure if you're going to do an investigation you got to do it right and it's a big job okay jeffrey tubman thanks so much legal analyst jeff toobin in a moment we'll get to that question of the press [Music] as for the media this is a whole program by itself we realize but we know from just answering the phone around here that the amount of attention we are giving this story is at the very least debatable good evening we begin tonight with the white house crisis we in the news as you can see are devoting major time and resources to these events but have we been carried away are we doing too much and are we not being fair the modern media machinery uh has the ability to turn any story into one of oj like proportions are the media going too far it's hard to argue at this point that they are because of the political gravity of the story we put that fairness question on our internet site today it's not a scientifically done poll but 57 percent of those who responded believe that at this point we in the media are not being unfair frankly we were surprised that's a

serious question but has the coverage unduly influenced public opinion before all the facts are in this certainly concerns the white house our survey found that 62 percent of those who had an opinion said that based on the coverage so far they believe the president has done something illegal but as we said those are unscientific polls so let's get out in the country and ask some questions here's abc's tom foreman at the national western stock show in denver it is hard to find

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denver it is hard to find anyone who does not know about this latest presidential scandal and easy to find opinions from those who have never trusted this president i can't believe he's still in office after all the things he's told and that people still have any faith in clinton from those who once did trust him i have seen him as someone that represents my particular generation uh and i'm real disappointed and from those who still do really i don't think it's anybody's business what he does i mean as long as he is to cost the taxpayers money but as news of this scandal has spread many voters are questioning just how big this story really is in chicago some are saying the media have already taken it way too far to talk about impeaching somebody over this like when it's nothing at this point other than uh you know word of mouth it just seems silly to me in sacramento some point out almost nothing has been proven like you know when you're in court they say you're not guilty until you've proven guilty am i right or wrong yet the media beat goes on i think the media is bored and this is just something for them to play with i think clinton he will um he will be redeemed the media do have their defenders in this atlanta diner some say whenever the basic integrity of a president is questioned of course it should be widely reported nationally and internationally and from a perspective of how we're viewed throughout the world i think it's critical however it seems clear that this story is still a much bigger crisis in washington and media circles than it is out here then again this story has just begun tom foreman abc news denver thank you thomas we now know for a fact that not everyone is reassured by the media at a moment like this joining us this evening is tom rosenstiel the director of an organization called the project for excellence in journalism how do you think the media is doing tom well i think the question here is not how much coverage but the character of

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how much coverage but the character of the coverage so much of what we've seen in the last three days is speculation rumor innuendo there's such a pressure on the press to add something new and there aren't that many new facts uh and that's our problem the press's first obligation is to the facts and we've gotten ahead of them let me say for the uh for the case of exercise that i think the press has been pretty good on saying repeatedly these are allegations allegations allegations would you have us ignore them no not not ignore the allegations at all but we've had reporters go on and characterize secondhand what is on the tapes we've had reporters talk about their impression of the mental state after of monica lewinsky after listening to a few minutes of the tapes we've had reporters go on and say uh that the president has 48 hours to address the american people or he won't be able to put the scandal behind him okay tom rosenstiel thanks very much critical of the press part of his job there's also some other news in the world we'll be back in just a moment [Music] on world news tonight this saturday public opinion moves against president clinton a growing number of americans now doubt his honesty and ability to govern the former white house intern who could challenge president clinton's sworn testimony once again talking a deal with a special prosecutor and close friends and advisers rush to offer their advice to the president as the white house sinks deeper into crisis [Applause] from abc news world headquarters in new york january 24th this is world news tonight saturday here's forest soil good evening there are clear indications tonight the crisis in the white house

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tonight the crisis in the white house is growing worse for president clinton possibly much worse a new abc news poll today shows less than half of americans believe mr clinton has quote the honesty and integrity to serve effectively our poll also shows that 48 percent of americans believe the president did have an affair with monica lewinsky 35 believe he told her to lie and if the president lied under oath by denying the affair

sixty-seven percent of americans think he should resign the crisis in the white house is now four days old so you can see how quickly events are moving and there were fresh developments today we have several reports beginning with abc's jackie judd in washington how about putting a sneeze on miss lewinsky out of the ritz curl the struggle between independent counsel ken starr and lawyer william ginsburg about monica lewinsky's future reached no resolution today ginsburg is demanding immunity from prosecution for lewinsky if she cooperates in the probe starr seems unprepared at this point to agree because star could potentially bring such charges as perjury and obstruction of justice against lewinsky some analysts say that he has the upper hand ken starr knows going in that he needs the cooperation of monica lewinsky but he also knows that monica lewinsky desperately needs the protection of the independent council she doesn't have a good option but starr faces a dilemma if lewinsky changes her story to say there was an affair with mr clinton and that he did ask her to lie will she then be accused of saying whatever it takes to save herself the president's lawyer certainly thinks so everybody can bend if placed under enough pressure to bend and mr star seems hell-bent on on on getting president clinton because starr knows that lewinsky's credibility will be questioned no matter what

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what he's moving quickly to seize evidence that would stand on its own in a case a source tells abc news that lewinsky consented to having fbi agents go through her apartment at the watgate on thursday for evidence related to the alleged affair with mr clinton and then of course there are the tapes recorded by lewinsky's friend linda tripp today a new york literary agent admitted that she told tripp to tape the calls as a way of protecting herself if all of this became public it's just your word against the world and before i go out with you and make it my world and my reputation my family against the world we got to do something tonight newsweek released excerpts from some of the tapes in one portion lewinsky says if i needed to i would say this did not happen and she also predicted she would quote get personally screwed if it ever came to that forest jackie judd in washington thank you jackie as the investigation continues president clinton has been meeting today with his top advisors trying to find a strategy to cope with a crisis that could derail his presidency however mr clinton did take time this afternoon to practice his state of the union speech which he is delivering on tuesday abc's sam donaldson joins us with the latest from the white house and it's the most difficult circumstance in which to deliver this speech sam forest while the lawyers are working on the legal problem others are grappling with the snowballing political problem of eroding public support the president's hollywood friend harry thomason who's given advice in the past on public relations spent the night mickey cantor the former commerce secretary has been hired on as a lawyer who'll also help sell a positive story even harold ickes who left after the first term disappointed he'd not been made chief of staff is said to be lending a hand on an unpaid basis and leading this team is none other than the first lady who during the 1992 jennifer flowers crisis took charge so effectively the first urgent requirement is to shore up the president's support within his own party

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president's support within his own party prominent democrats have pointedly not stepped forward to defend mr clinton in fact leon panetta his former chief of staff today called the scandal a crisis for the party and said if the charges are not baseless it would be better if vice president gore became president now party chairman roy romer in an interview with abc news appeared horrified at even being asked to comment on panetta's advice would you agree i think it's absolutely inappropriate to to ask and answer speculative questions like that you know it doesn't help us solve the problems i just think it's a question that ought not be asked or answered governor how do you personally feel about this well i tell you uh i believe that this man is telling the truth i don't know any of the details around this but i i know he has been beleaguered by attacks since he has been president this afternoon vice president gore came into the white house to confer with the president but not about this it was said along with other national security officials gore attended a full-scale meeting on another crisis the one in iraq some stories suggest that the white house is now paralyzed with this scandal it certainly is demoralized but at the moment the important business of considering the next move on iraq is continuing forest sam donaldson at the white house thank you sam now another point of

view joining us former clinton advisor now abc news political analyst george stephanopoulos and george quite clearly the president and his advisors are deeply involved with trying to stem the the bleeding from this crisis are they able to look at other business at all boy not too much for us you know the state of the union is scheduled it's getting written it has to be given but for the most part everyone else is walking around wondering is their work going to be relevant in the future so they watch tv and read the newspapers like everyone else waiting for the other details with one big exception the world doesn't stop so national security has to go on and that's why the secretaries of state defense the vice president today were meeting on iraq a lot of people have been questioning how this crisis and how the problems the president is facing might affect his

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president is facing might affect his decision-making in other areas most particularly the question of iraq and the growing confrontation between the two countries well yeah remember for us this recent movie wag the dog where a president goes to war in order to cover up a scandal that clearly will not happen here and the situation with iraq has been building up for an awful long time but i think in this case art actually makes it more difficult for the president to do what he needs to do he'll be sensitive to the criticism that he is taking this action to avoid uh the problems here at home abc news political analyst george stephanopoulos thank you george of course as george mentioned not only americans are watching this crisis unfold much of the world is paying close attention and as you can imagine nowhere more closely than in iraq here's abc's mike lee in baghdad today one of saddam's newspapers claimed quote to keep the media busy with something other than a sex scandal the american president may start a foolish military action by attacking iraq throughout most of the world from jerusalem to moscow to berlin it dominates the foreign and unfortunately for the rest of the world bill clinton isn't just a jack rabbit from some small town in arkansas he's the leader of the free world in britain concerned that an american president might be brought down for what loving someone having a sexual relationship where's the problem it just seems to be something with politicians and sex in france where the media virtually ignored the late president meteoron's illegitimate child many shrug off allegations against president clinton if he has lied we could understand that he would be impeached but uh that's the only thing we could say in france things would be very different in rome where amore seems to be everywhere just look over that guy's shoulder many italians say clinton is only normal well italian males would admire him and the

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italian males would admire him and the italian women would condemn him and for some in south africa when we have a scandal like this it's kind of refreshing for us it takes the focus of the dream and groom that we have here even so there's emerging concern overseas that this scandal could shove important world issues to the background mike lee abc news london and we are reporting the story around the clock so for the latest on this story at any hour of the day visit our website at abcnews.com you will also find complete results from the latest abc news tracking poll more on the widening crisis at the white house specifically its impact on the vice president al gore and bill clinton are good friends but in this crisis they may very well find themselves on different sides of the fence as we reported at least one democrat is already talking about an early gore presidency as abc's carla davis reports there was no press access to the vice president when he arrived at the white house late this afternoon and mr gore said nothing about the latest scandal in his public speeches this week but his demeanor at a white house photo op with the president on thursday said enough fallout from the latest allegations about the president is hitting the second in command as well it does not do the democratic party any good it certainly doesn't do the vice president any good and anything that hurts the president hurts his number two inside the beltway advice to gore is to remain loyal to his longtime friend and political partner well he's not distancing himself with the president and there's no reason to and nor should he from a blatantly political point of view he shouldn't gore told a group of newspaper columnists this week quote the president has denied the charges and i believe it otherwise mr gore has not gone out of his way to comment on this scandal his schedule is unchanged including a dinner here tonight at his residence with house minority leader and one time clinton opponent richard gephardt carla davis abc news

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richard gephardt carla davis abc news washington this current crisis has turned into a defining moment for the president more and more his critics are calling on mr clinton to say exactly what he means and to mean exactly what he says here's abc's michelle mcqueen mr president welcome adding fuel to the president's current crisis is the kind of artful dodging over a simple question that has long enraged his critics no improper relationship defined what you mean by that well i think you know what it means it means that that there is not a uh a sexual relationship an improper sexual relationship or any other kind of improper relationship he's so quick he's so glib i mean that's why they call him slick willy i mean when they asked him about about the jennifer flowers incident i mean his his response was no it's not true and i guess he was referring to the fact that maybe it wasn't 12 years maybe it was 11 years and according to sources who have heard the tapes of monica lewinsky's phone conversations the president's denial of the affair may hinge on his belief allegedly described by her in the tapes that oral sex does not constitute adultery it is part of a pattern of nuanced responses to everyday moral dilemmas that has characterized mr clinton's career from questions about drug use the answer to that question is i've never broken state law and that when i was in england i experimented with marijuana a time or two and i didn't like it and didn't inhale and never tried it again to decisions about military service i did not dodge the draft i did not do anything wrong whenever there are press conferences you were left with a little sort of funny feeling that he wasn't leveling he he was fudging over something and remarkable to some although the pattern has held throughout his presidency mr clinton has not only survived but thrived a tribute to his political skill i didn't struggle likely in part because many of his generation have engaged in the same kinds of rationalizations about drugs and sex

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rationalizations about drugs and sex including for example virginia senator chuck robb who when accused of infidelity also said he had not quote slept with the other woman for many people sex is intercourse um there's this high school mentality that people my age and bill clinton's age grew up with which was that you could do everything but and it didn't count but mr clinton seems to take the evasions a step further than other politicians if the story continues it will be the ultimate test of his verbal gymnastics michelle mcqueen abc news the white house finally tonight the political crisis that is making white house officials put in a lot of overtime is also as you can imagine keeping legions of reporters busy abc's john martin reports on the media in full battle mode it it's the sex scandal that has all america talking and yes it is entertaining make room for the liars please once again public doubt about a presidency is beginning to fester in a way not seen since the final days of 1974. watergate took months to develop as a story this took a week president's press secretary michael mcurry in the new media world of cable and internet it's all lewinsky all the time there is maybe a little bit too much music and dramatics about this when there are still so many facts that remain unclear in 1992 with jennifer flowers the mainstream press held back at first but now there is less difference between it and the supermarket press so that's the reason she went to portland yes yes yes yes yes yes the tabloid star like its mainstream competitors it finds people who say they knew her were you stunned this just couldn't be not to monica lewinsky that i knew no no not

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to monica lewinsky that i knew no no not not stunned but it's you know a lot can happen in five years but there's a difference the star pays for its information here's the contract it's the amount we agreed upon they don't pay at u.s news and world report but it's looking for facts in a hurry too this may be a case speaking now as a general sort of um skull to the press where the frenzy is justified because the fundamental facts here matter they matter because no matter how many news outlets and how much chatter it all still comes down to the presidency and who's telling the truth john martin abc news washington and one program note join us tonight for the premiere of our new broadcast abc news saturday night here is peter jennings trying to understand this white house crisis there are people who believe the presidency is really in jeopardy we'll talk to politicians we'll talk to twenty-something it was a twenty one-year-old girl who's alleged to have been involved and is this good for the country we've been listening to the hollywood comedians make hay out of

the president's troubles we hope you'll join us that is abc news saturday night at 10 9 central tomorrow good morning america sunday and this week with sam and koki i'm forest sawyer for all of us here at abc news good night on world news tonight this monday the president says it one more time i did not have sexual relations with that woman miss lewinsky i never told anybody to lie not a single time never but the investigation continues monica lewinsky seen but not heard we'll take a closer look at how it is to write the state of the union speech under this kind of pressure and there is the other crisis what will the president do

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the president do about iraq his government says time is running out [Music] from abc this is world news tonight with peter jennings reporting tonight from washington good evening here in washington tonight on the eve of his state of the union address to the congress and the nation the president has felt obliged to say again that he did not have a sexual relationship with 21-year-old monica lewinsky miss lewinsky and her lawyer are negotiating today with the independent council about the basis on which he might testify to this alleged affair and over there at the white house tonight the president's staff is struggling to change the agenda this town is already like a pressure cooker and with all of congress about to return tomorrow it can only become more so so we're going to begin tonight's reporting with sam donaldson who's at the white house sam well peter under mounting pressure from members of his own party as well as others to speak out the president has broken a four-day silence to repeat his claim of total innocence in this affair at a white house ceremony on child care programs presided over by his wife which he had not planned to attend mr clinton stepped forward to make an emotional and somewhat angry statement i'm going to say this again i did not have sexual relations with that woman miss lewinsky i never told anybody to lie not a single time never these allegations are false and i need to go back to work for the american people thank you but just what was his relationship with monica lewinsky reporters asked to no response once again it was left to press secretary mike mccurry to dodge and weave under a barrage of questions why do you think that in the face of the president's very strong denial a lot of americans still apparently don't believe him uh in part is because many of you apparently don't

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apparently don't this theme that the press and mr clinton's political enemies are responsible for any problems of credibility is now being pressed vigorously by some of the president's aides and friends but the president's own pack may also be contributing to it yes i was bill clinton's lover for 12 years when jennifer flowers made that claim back in 1992 she produced audio tapes on which mr clinton is heard apparently telling her to lie about it if they ever hit you with it just saying they'll go on there's nothing i can do i just think that if everybody's on record deny that you've got no problem now monica lewinsky claims in a tape conversation with a girlfriend that mr clinton told her to lie about their affair of course the president denies that but peter this simply adds to the doubts sam i have one more question about the white house but just hang on for one sec if you would the state of the union address tomorrow as important as it is is only one of the important events that's going to happen here the other involves monica lewinsky herself and if it does actually take place it could be very important to the president's future so here's abc's jackie judd when monica lewinsky surfaced today it was to meet her lawyers who were still wrangling with independent counsel ken starr about whether she will cooperate in his criminal investigation he knows that i want essentially full immunity he knows that i want and will accept nothing less and i promise not to prosecute so how close we are is really in his hands not mine time is running out for negotiations because lewinsky has been subpoenaed to appear before starr's grand jury as early as tomorrow if she does appear without a deal her lawyer has said she would plead the fifth starr also is searching for evidence to substantiate lewinsky's taped claims of a sexual relationship with mr clinton sources have told abc news that starr received information that an eyewitness discovered the pair in an intimate moment at the white house in the spring of 1996. starr today subpoenaed evelyn lieberman

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starr today subpoenaed evelyn lieberman who was deputy chief of staff at the time to testify about the alleged occurrence the white house spokesman mike mccurry claimed today that he has been unable to find any staff member aware of such an incident we've checked even with people who would have presumably been brought a report of any incident of that nature and they categorically deny there was such an incident privately white house aides have suggested lewinsky had an overactive imagination but a source with direct knowledge of what lewinsky has claimed has provided abc news with two dates when mr clinton allegedly called her and talked about sex starr can subpoena white house phone records to confirm those calls took place it was subpoenas from lawyers for paula jones that led to all these revelations about lewinsky today mr clinton's lawyer robert bennett argued that clinton enemies are using the jones case to destroy the president and he's asked the presiding judge to move up the trial date from may so mr clinton's innocence can be proven sooner rather than later peter thanks very much jackie chad in all of that which is going on here people are incredibly sensitive to public opinion as for what you are thinking many things it seems but the white house is pleased that the president's job approval rating is still high 59 percent approve even though 57 percent of the people we polled said they think mr clinton did have some sort of affair with monica lewinsky though only 36 percent say that the affair is reason enough for him to resign however if it turns out that the president lied under oath about it 63 say he should resign which takes us back now to sam donaldson at the white house sam you're there all the time only spent a couple of hours there today but i thought that today people were feeling just a little better much more upbeat here that's the mood the polls somewhat the fact that no witnesses have come forward of course kenneth star may have them but they haven't come forward the president making this very strong denial again peter

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peter suggest to everyone that that's his story and i'm not saying it's a story that's false i'm simply saying that all of these things that you read over the weekend about maybe the president will admit a little of this or a little of that probably aren't true that he is going to say no sexual relations period go up tomorrow night in the state of the union address not mention this according to white house aides not say a word just talk about the business of the country by the way peter this afternoon he practiced for over three hours in the white house theater the family theater there's a photo released by the white house his dog is on the floor behind him i guess you can't see along with a with a toy but that was a long time and it clearly indicates that the president believes this speech is very very important thank you sam and dog seen and on the subject of the state of the union later in the broadcast we'll take a closer look at how two of the men working on the speech do it in this kind of an environment and in a moment some of the days are the news iraq is on the agenda the white house says it is getting fed up with diplomacy going nowhere and a perk for americans from the asian financial crisis gas prices lower than we've seen in years [Music] this is world news tonight with peter jennings brought to you by charles schwab [Music] it is such a beautiful and peaceful place to look at at night the white house with the washington monument behind probably much of the country would like to take a closer look inside the white house tonight to see how the president and his inner circle are really dealing with these challenges to his credibility and if you believe there is a crisis the challenge to his authority that's not an easy thing to do and over the weekend we're sure you noticed various presidential surrogates have been outed about saying the president is really focused working on the state of the union speech for tomorrow night that everything's going to be fine in time thank you very much the state of the union address is always a big event for

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union address is always a big event for the president it takes several months to put together community reinvestment is actually not a bad phrase in the west wing of the white house gene sperling worked straight through the weekend on the substance of it everything from education initiatives to the asian economic crisis he's the policy wonk on the trade agreement uh the ustr thinks it's 240 right now but with the white house under such pressure to answer other questions does he worry that the public won't pay attention this time often what we have to do is try to put an idea and hope you'll cover it and somebody will see it this is his one chance to talk directly to 60 million people paul begallo was reluctant to give up his morning run either

day this weekend but even though he's a principal editor of the speech try to turn that into like an applause line he's had to give a lot of time to making the president's case on these character issues on the telephone and on television there is an investigation it will clear the president that is now a crucial part of his job it's what i do i mean this is my job you could go to an emergency room and i would faint okay but there are people who very coolly and calmly can take a shattered body and put it back together my job's a lot easier than that neither man is going to tell us what's in his heart that is not their job having the country pay attention to the state of the union speech that is what they must focus on despite the media's pressure he didn't elaborate on his denial the country will drive this more than the elites but i think after too much they're going to start saying okay enough get out of my face with this will you check we always use the 220 trade agreements gene sperling says what so many insiders say bill clinton has an uncanny ability to focus no matter what is going on around him is it frustrating as a policy guy to see another major policy speech

[01:12:00 \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dQKX0tn59A&t=4320s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dQKX0tn59A&t=4320s)

to see another major policy speech overshadowed by the character question i think by keeping his focus and and keeping our eye on the ball and what the american people care about i think the speech will do quite well tomorrow well we shall see let's go up to capitol hill now because abc's cokie roberts is with us this evening cookie one assumes that uh the congress is going to come back and be polite tomorrow night what about after that i i want to say i'm not on kavanaugh i just noticed that but the congress will be polite as far as we know vice president gore went today to capitol hill and talked to a group of moderate democrats and said to them please be there tomorrow night and please give the president your support they were planning to do that anyway uh but then after the speech is over they will come out and there will be hordes of reporters there as there always are for a state of the union message and this will be the first shot that a lot of reporters have at members of congress they've been away and of course they'll be it will be asking about the scandal and what they think about it and and that's where the coverage is likely to be in the week ahead if things stay pretty much as they are now how much trouble will the president be in with the congress well he's already in a good bit of trouble with them because they are unhappy with the fact that the democrats particularly they felt like they were on a roll that he had an agenda that they liked and they were ready to go with it and now they think it's going to be hard for him to to push it it's hard for people to listen hard to get the momentum going and that they think that the republicans will take advantage of a weakened president to attack them and attack them in the coming election so he he could have a serious problem with them as they all get together and start to talk about it okay cokey thanks very much lots of time to talk about that tomorrow night we will of course cover the state of the union at length including the address and when we come back this evening art and reality just before our last report a brief review of the developments in the white house crisis today president clinton said more firstfully today

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said more firstfully today that he did not have a sexual relationship with the white house intern monica lewinsky lawyers for ms lewinsky are still negotiating with special prosecutor kenneth starr for possible immunity from prosecution for her in exchange for her testimony and finally from us then art imitating life and the concern that it may be the other way around we've been talking tonight about how hard it can be to govern the country during a crisis like we are witnessing now as we heard earlier the white house is even nervous that it's iraq policy might be perceived to be influenced by the president's personal problems all this intrigue and drama sounds like a pretty good movie plot abc's beth nissen reports that in a way it already is sexual misconduct occurred inside the oval office in weg the dog the nation's president has sex with a young visitor to the white house his aides stage a phony war to divert public and media attention away from the presidential scandal the president's gonna go to war with albania in about 30 minutes in the real white house officials are actually concerned about what might be called wag the dog syndrome concerned that a decision to attack iraq now might be seen as an effort to spin the nation's attention away from the president's character problems the circumstances of the piece of fiction showing up when we're dealing with deadly reality may be less than fortunate some white house officials are said to be equally concerned about the portrayal of the president in another movie to be released in march primary colors is based on reporter joe

klein's fictional account of the clinton presidential campaign a hairdresser has come forward alleging a long-term affair hollywood insiders say movie makers aren't trying to satirize or hurt president clinton many of them support him but studios and directors do bank on america's fascination with certain stories we want to look into the closets we want to lift up the rug we don't see we want to see a little bit of the dirt and nothing is quite so dirty as stories of illicit sex

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quite so dirty as stories of illicit sex especially involving a powerful public figure bethanism abc news new york and that is our report on world news tonight later this evening on nightline they'll take up this crisis again and we will be here in washington tomorrow night for the state of the union address by the president an important day i'm peter jennings we hope you have a good evening and good night from washington stay with abc news for the latest on the crisis in the white house and for the president's state of the union peter jennings reports from washington on world news tonight tomorrow this has been a presentation of abc news more americans get their news from abc news than from any other source abc news now always on on world news tonight this tuesday the president gives his state of the union address to the congress under a cloud mrs clinton says the attacks on her husband are part of a right-wing conspiracy the independent council kenneth starr says nonsense and we'll take a closer look at the president's ideas for social security and child care [Music] from abc this is world news tonight with peter jennings reporting tonight from washington good evening it's a long time since the president's state of the union address has received so much attention it's always a big event this traditional visit to the congress by the president to report on the state of the nation but this year this week in this city it is the state of the presidency that has so many people engaged they don't all talk about it publicly of course and some part of the president's legislative agenda will have an impact on everyone in the country but it is not possible to isolate the issues in which he is

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isolate the issues in which he is interested from the issue of his viability as a politician so let's first go to the white house and abc sam donaldson sam peter this was a day when the white house desperately wanted to change the subject from scandal to the state of the union but it hasn't worked out that way so far the trouble began this morning when the first lady showed up for an interview in new york city on the nbc news today show during which she vigorously defended her husband bill and i have been accused of everything including murder by some of the very same people who are behind these allegations so from my perspective this is part of the continuing political campaign against my husband that's been said before but then mrs clinton trained her fire directly at independent council kenneth starr within the context of what she called a vast right-wing conspiracy we get a politically motivated prosecutor who is allied with the right wing opponents of my husband scratching for dirt intimidating witnesses doing everything possible to try to make some accusation against my husband starr quickly fired back that is nonsense he said in a written statement taking the opportunity to remind everyone of what's at stake we receive credible evidence of serious federal crimes he said hardly the wind up desired here for tonight's speech which the president made final touches to while practicing its delivery again today in the family theater tonight on capitol hill the president will not mention the scandal according to his aides but instead will focus on such items as how to save social security first step set aside future budget surpluses to shore up the fund he'll propose raising the minimum wage and he'll tell saddam hussein that the world community intends to deny him the right to ever use chemical biological and other types of mass destruction weapons again but mr clinton will not set an ultimatum or a deadline tonight the country will see the

[01:20:00 \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dQKX0tn59A&t=4800s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dQKX0tn59A&t=4800s)

tonight the country will see the president lay out his vision of the future even while it wonders about his own peter sam thanks we'll talk a little later in the broadcast we'll also take a closer look tonight at a couple of the proposals the president will make tonight one for younger and one for older americans however people react to mrs clinton's suggestion that there is a conspiracy against the president and some people in the white

house are deeply committed to the idea many people do apparently think the star investigation is unfair in the latest abc news poll we find that more people disapprove of the way mr star is conducting himself and more than 50 percent think he is interested in hurting the president politically rather than revealing the truth but what about this charge of conspiracy tonight abc's michelle mcqueen we've been married it was a calm but stunning salvo by the president's defender in chief the first lady and she named names along with independent counsel kenneth starr conservative senators jesse helms and lock faircloth for their alleged role in supporting star and conservative activist jerry falwell whom she accused of peddling a video filled with wild accusations about the clintons they are all mrs clinton said today part of a vast right-wing conspiracy and it undermining the president and his political agenda and she all but dared reporters to write about that with the intense frustration and irritation that she is having i can understand how she lashed out at us senator helms and mr falwell had no comment except mr falwell spokesman referred to an earlier statement saying what our country needs most right now is prayer for all the drama of her remarks mrs clinton was plowing old territory in 1995 an aide to the white house council prepared a 300-page report on the so-called media food chain that transforms fiction into fact using conservative magazines and internet sites while it was widely ridiculed as paranoid when it was leaked white house spokesman mike mccurry defended it we wanted to refute some of

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defended it we wanted to refute some of the very aggressive charges being made fallaciously against the president most of most often on the internet coming from a variety of kind of crazy right wing sources others especially in the conservative press say it's business as usual every administration always feels the heat and complains about the press it's just the way washington works but it's not that simple there are unusually close relationships among the players for example the conservative rutherford institute is funding the paula jones case against the president and that case is increasingly intertwined with the star investigation clearly the white house is hoping that those kinds of connections raise more doubts in the public's mind than the allegations about the president's behavior do michelle mcqueen abc news washington there will be another chance for the first lady to take this up to do she's going to be on abc's good morning america tomorrow talking to lisa mccree as for the independent council here in washington today the first of numerous witnesses that ken starr has subpoenaed in this phase of his investigation appeared before a grand jury it was betty curry the president's private secretary here's abc's jackie judd betty curry first had to make her way through mobs of reporters before getting inside the courthouse where she remained for several hours we have nothing to say she's relevant to the investigation because it was curry whose name and phone number appeared on packages that monica lewinsky sent to the white house and who according to sources cleared lewinsky into the white house to visit mr clinton and it was betty curry according to vernon jordan who asked him to help lewinsky find a job lewinsky herself was supposed to testify before the grand jury today but that is in limbo until starr decides whether to promise not to prosecute her we will tell the truth in exchange for immunity or what is more properly called a promise not to prosecute star's office is still evaluating whether what lewinsky would tell them is worth the promise of some sort of

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is worth the promise of some sort of immunity today abc news learned more about what lewinsky said when she was secretly taped by investigators according to several sources lewinsky offered linda tripp a share of an overseas condominium if tripp lied about the relationship and she allegedly urged tripp to meet with mr clinton's attorney robert bennett reached tonight bennett said that he doesn't know why lewinsky would have said that and that he did not hear from linda tripp peter thank you jackie chad it's no secret to any of you and it's very clear to us that is a news story the clinton crisis has been moving at a pace that has caught many people off guard and there are bound to be mistakes in the early edition of the dallas morning news it was reported that a secret service agent was prepared to testify that he had seen the president and monica lewinsky in an intimate situation the paper retracted its story in its later editions but with so much of the media paying such attention a single item can work its way right through the system and even get magnified before it's corrected by the way the president will use his state of the union address tonight to warn saddam

hussein once more take that up when we come back [Music] this is world news tonight with peter jennings brought to you by office depot there has been endless speculation here today about how the president not his speech but mr clinton himself will be received on capitol hill tonight here are some clues mr speaker the president of the united states in the first few minutes after the president arrives in the chamber you can begin to judge the political temperature [Applause] our senators and representatives eager to greet him shake his hand touch him republicans and democrats are very aware that the country will be watching them carefully as an occasion this is meant to be a celebration of the american democratic system this is one of the few ceremonies that at least in theory should bring us all

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at least in theory should bring us all together the republican speaker of the house mr gingrich president united states will be an honored guest to the house and senate [Applause] so the country will be looking very closely but in all likelihood tonight the president will be received correctly so just before we leave to prepare for the state of the union a couple of other questions for sam donaldson and cookie roberts is in the bureau this evening cokey i talked to a senior democrat up there today and i said do you believe the president he said i believe him today emphatically he said is that about the mood that's about the best you'll get even the people speaking on the record and poor microphones did not defend the president they said things like well you should give them the benefit of the doubt and of course off the record and not into microphones they're saying far more damaging things but you can't count on this scene tonight telling you anything peter i remember right before jim wright had to leave a speaker of the house when members were telling us and the press he's got to go he's got to get out of here he went to a democratic caucus and they gave him a big cheer and a standing ovation these are not the most straightforward people so i think you're saying that for those people around the country us included who are looking for these clues it's going to look wired and respectful as always i think that's absolutely right i'd be amazed if it doesn't but sometimes something happens that changes that but it would surprise me okay let's go to sam donaldson the white house sam other than the president's appearance at church the other day this is his first big public appearance since he became enveloped in this do you think he's nervous i think he probably is nervous but you can always count on bill clinton in the clutch to deliver his speech well there's no doubt about that it's interesting aids have gone over every line of this speech to make certain there's no double entendre in it some innocent phrase that in normal times no one would pay attention to but the country tonight would go he he he so the speech may be eloquent but it's not going to be anything that's other than squeaky clean okay thanks both of you very much sam and koki looking forward to talking to you later by the way the republican response

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by the way the republican response tonight is going to be given by senator trent lot he did remove a couple of words that he thought might be misinterpreted we hope you'll join us for our coverage of the president's state of union address live from capitol hill nine o'clock eastern time i'm peter jennings that's world news tonight for tonight have a good evening and good night from washington [Music] on world news tonight this wednesday president clinton gets out of washington to talk about his state of the union and he gets a friendly reception should a secret service agent be obliged to testify against the man it is his job to protect we'll take a closer look and if the president decides to attack iraq the us will be using some brand new weapons [Music] from abc news world headquarters in new york wednesday january 28th this is world news tonight with peter jennings good evening yes the president got out of washington today and it was very easy to get the impression that he was happy about it mr clinton has not left his problems behind by any means but when he went to the midwest today to stump for the legislation he laid out in the state of the union last night people were glad to see him though the trip was not flawless abc's sam donaldson is with him there it was air force one stuck in the mud at the airport in champaign-urbana illinois the president on board unable to proceed was it a show stopper that the pilot trying to make a tight turn ran off the taxiway but soon mr clinton and all the planes baggage were hot putting it along to a backup craft hastily flown in and a day that was going very well for the president continued [Applause]

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[Applause] when presidents travel it's always impressive but for mr clinton today it was also important what would the people say about scandal i'm telling you we're moving in the right direction vice president gore was so uncharacteristically animated in warming up the crowd at the university of illinois that people leap to their feet in response [Applause] and his introduction of the president may go down as al gore's finest certainly most impatient hour to join me in supporting him and standing by his side i give to you the president of the united states of america william jefferson clinton for his part the president talked policy not emotion but once on the subject of saving social security waxed lyrical i don't know about you but when i was your age i never thought about it i thought i would live forever always young always young and as far as the typical crowd comment here always forgive me really i don't care i mean either way it doesn't bother me i think you've got to separate into two pieces what he's doing for the country and you know his personal obligations or his personal life they clearly loved him in champaign urbana but when he finally did get to la crosse wisconsin someone had stamped in the snow a negative comment but here at the rally site in la crosse a large crowd is apparently friendly as they listen to president clinton so here's the strategy today play on the large friendly crowds play on the high poles but answer no more questions mrs clinton said to lisa mccree and good morning america this morning no more questions no more answers president clinton has said he won't answer questions either and today the press secretary said he won't answer questions at least until the investigation is over and peter who knows how long that'll be sam thanks very much sam donaldson with the president in the midwest today those americans who heard or saw the president give his state of the union last night i think he was effective

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think he was effective in fact 79 percent say they approved of most of it 15 percent disapproved the big question is can the president convince the congress republicans and democrats to do what he would like them to do abc's cokie roberts is with us tonight cookie am i right in guessing that it pretty much depends on the issue it depends on the issue and it depends on the evidence peter uh in talking to people today those polls got their attention uh they're willing to give the president a little bit more of a chance here and of course as you say the issues matter because if it's something popular that they want to go along with they're likely to go along but they're very worried about this evidence and bipartisanship could dissolve in a moment could it be oh i think that's very fair to say it's an election year so it was likely to happen anyway but uh republicans see a big opening here and it's certainly likely to take it and the democrats say you know there's a great big cloud hanging over us and it could break open on us and we're still terribly worried okay thanks very much cookie roberts on capitol hill tonight which brings us now to the independent council kenneth starr and his investigation of the president and monica lewinsky mr stark called president clinton's former chief of staff leon panetta before his grand jury today and other witnesses with very close access to the president could well follow here's abc's jackie judd panetta who was chief of staff when lewinsky was an intern spent the entire day inside the grand jury room i am personally not aware of any improper relationship sexual or otherwise by this president and any of the white house interns or anyone else for that matter those words had to be a relief to the white house after panetta earlier had made one of the most damaging public comments of any clinton ally he had told a reporter if there's something there it would be better for the democrats if gore became president independent counsel ken starr is moving quickly on this investigation panetta apparently was subpoenaed only yesterday in california for today's

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yesterday in california for today's appearance and now abc news has been told by sources that starr will soon subpoena several secret service employees to see what they might know about a relationship between mr clinton and lewinsky stars investigators also were preparing to interview an oregon man named andy blyler who went on television last night with his wife by his side to say that he had an affair with lewinsky their attorney said lewinsky called the blylers frequently about another affair she said she was having this one with a high-ranking white house official terry giles says she might actually have sought out mr clinton this girl went

to the white house with an agenda she is sexually obsessed she wanted she found the president attractive giles says it is possible that lewinsky made up the affair but he also says she gave too much detail for that to be the case if he is right that would give ken starr more leads to check out peter on world news tonight this thursday negotiations between independent council kenneth starr and the lawyer for monica lewinsky broken off for now a white house meeting between the president and miss lewinsky after she was subpoenaed an abortion clinic is bombed in alabama and a man is killed and tobacco executives on capitol hill pledging a whole new attitude we'll take a closer look [Music] from abc news world headquarters in new york thursday january 29th this is world news tonight with peter jennings good evening the crisis in the white house may seem on the surface to be a little less intense but that is probably misleading there is some threat to the president lurking in every corner today two main developments the independent council kenneth starr and the lawyer for monica lewinsky have

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and the lawyer for monica lewinsky have not been able to resolve whether miss lewinsky will testify about her relationship with the president in exchange for immunity from prosecution and there are serious questions today about a meeting between the president and miss lewinsky after she was subpoenaed to testify about the relationship so first here's abc's jackie judd after a brief meeting with the independent council lawyer william ginsberg currently said that he was preparing monica lewinsky's defense a sign that little or no progress had been made in securing lewinsky's testimony ginsburg is holding out for full immunity and starr thinks that she has more to say than she has about the president what lewinsky can do for starr is fill in the blanks in a series of events filling in those blank star believes could prove that there was an effort to get her to lie about her relationship with mr clinton in exchange for a job the events began on december 17th lewinsky is subpoenaed by lawyers for paula jones who want evidence of sexual misconduct by mr clinton december 28th 11 days after lewinsky receives the subpoena administration sources say lewinsky meets with the president according to the new york times mr clinton asks her to say her trips to the white house were to visit someone else january 7th lewinsky signs an affidavit swearing under oath there was no affair but it is not filed in court the next day january 8th lewinsky has her second job interview at revlon vernon jordan has said he arranged that because he was impressed with lewinsky's drive and ambition january 13th revlon offers her a job january 16 72 hours after the job offer is made the affidavit denying an affair is filed with the court star meanwhile made a dramatic move today he asked that the paula jones lawsuit be

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he asked that the paula jones lawsuit be halted because her lawyers were trying to get at the same witnesses starr is pursuing the judge would only agree to exclude anything having to do with lewinsky in his motion starr revealed more than he ever has before about his view of the clinton lewinsky investigation he said it raises issues of the gravest concern and is a paramount importance to the nation peter jackie thanks very much jackie judd in washington tonight abc's chief legal analyst jeffrey toobin joins us this evening jeffrey on the basis of what you know was this meeting illegal or ill-advised well it's definitely not a crime simply to meet with a uh witness in a case in which the president is one of the parties but it seems terribly ill-advised it raises all sorts of questions it's suspicious the president will now have to answer what was said why would why did you say it why did you hold the meeting then if you never hold the meeting you never have to answer those questions jeff toobin thanks very much at the white house today the president's spokesman was not at all forthcoming about monica lewinsky and that white house meeting on december the 28th as abc sam donaldson reports tonight sam the white house has its strategy has its strategy has its strategy right right peter perhaps everyone would like to know what the president has to say about that story but neither he nor the people who speak for him will talk about it naturally the president's press secretary mike mccurry was asked if monica lewinsky visited mr clinton on december 28th i'm not going to piecemeal respond to uh questions that have been raised on that on that specific question i don't have anything from the council's office that i can provide it's really an easy question to answer when visitors are passed through the white house gates their names are entered in a computer system that records who cleared them in and

who they are visiting that was presumably one of the reasons betty curry the president's personal secretary was called to testify before the grand jury sources have told abc news she often cleared lewinsky inn and the visitor computer records are

[01:40:00 \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dQKX0tn59A&t=6000s\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dQKX0tn59A&t=6000s)

and the visitor computer records are being turned over to prosecutor kenneth starr's office but the white house won't make them public a lot of other questions should be easy to answer also for instance has the president discussed the investigation with lewinsky in any way at any time has the president in fact given lewinsky any gifts and above all just what was the president's relationship with monica lewinsky surely he knows the answers to all these questions but his press secretary made it clear today that he doesn't and really doesn't want to very carefully that you don't know things you have to make it clear that you are out of the loop i am uh i'm not even sure position for you to be in i'm not even sure on this matter there is a loop well loop or no loop what they say here is that all of this will come out at the appropriate time and that presumably is when the investigation has been concluded until then peter the watch word here is stonewall and just hope that the questions go away sam thanks very much sam donaldson at the white house there is other news today on capitol hill the men who run the five largest tobacco companies came to promote a 368 billion dollar national settlement on tobacco and as abc's barry sarafin reports now that what they testified to congress would have been unthinkable just a few years ago they chose their words carefully but unlike their predecessors four years ago tobacco executives today acknowledge that nicotine is addictive under some definitions cigarette smoking is addictive yes i think uh under the way people use the term today i agree it is and they acknowledged health risks does uh smoking have a significant impact in as a risk factor in relation to lung cancer yes yes it does despite recent tobacco company documents showing that they had targeted children officials insisted that is not their policy it is immoral it is unethical as well as illegal to market to people under age many committee members were still

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committee members were still skeptical as a gesture of good faith the tobacco executives said they would release millions of industry documents now under seal in a minnesota court case but officials there say tobacco companies are still fighting the disclosure of the most damaging documents barry seraphin abc news washington

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